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The Mexican War.

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DELIVERED ON THE

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING,

AT CONWAY, MASS.,

NOVEMBER 26, 1846.

BY SAMUEL HARRIS,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN CONWAY.

Published by Request.

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GREENFIELD :
MERRIAM AND MIRICK, PRINTERS.
1847.

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S E R M O N .

HABAKKUK, 2: 12. WO TO HIM THAT BUILDETH A TOWN WITH
BLOOD, AND ESTABLISHETH A CITY BY INIQUITY!

It would be pleasing to dwell to day on the agreeable topics which the grateful review of a year may always suggest. But a more painful subject seems to demand our attention. For the first time in more than thirty years, we find ourselves involved in war with a foreign nation. It is an event too important in its bearings to be passed over in silence by the minister of the gospel.

The pastor is appointed as a watchman over the interests of morality and religion. According to the perfect ideal of his office, it is his business, rising above the bias of party or sect, above partiality or fear, or any selfish consideration, to plead for humanity against all wrongs, to proclaim the truth in its severe and simple majesty, and to vindicate all God's claims on men. In the discharge of this duty, he is called to speak upon all the relations and spheres of action belonging to human life; for man cannot act except as a moral and accountable being. If the minister sees men acting on principles contrary to the

gospel, if he sees measures adopted which are undermining morality and religion, whether in politics, in trade, or in whatever department of action, he is not only justified in speaking, but forbidden, under awful penalties, to be silent.

There are, indeed, difficulties attending the discussion of political affairs in the pulpit. If the preacher has any political preferences himself, as it will be strange if he has not, there is danger of his passing beyond the moral and religious, to the purely political bearings of public measures, and thus, by passing from the pastor into the partisan and turning the pulpit into a rostrum, of sullyng the purity and destroying the influence of his ministerial office. On the other hand, there are diversity of opinion and strong party feeling among his hearers, and the consequent danger of being misconstrued and of giving offence. This, however, is no reason for silence. The preacher can have no respect for himself and deserves none from his hearers, who model his preaching only by the desire to please. If his office has any claim to be an embassy from God, the preacher must be guided in what he says simply by the will of Him who sent him.

Actuated by these views, I am constrained to pass by all more grateful themes, more consonant though they be with this day of praise and joy, and direct your attention to the Mexican war. While I approach the subject, influenced by no ill will toward any man or any party—least of all toward the government with which the interests and honor of the nation must always be identified,—while I shall try to state nothing which is not fact, and to comment on facts in kindness

and candor, I shall aim also to speak in freedom what seems to me the truth. If any sentiments are advanced contrary to the convictions of any of you, I only ask you to give these sentiments a candid consideration and to judge of them by reason, conscience, and God's word. Nor do I expect to say aught with which any of you will be offended—having learned by experience that your minister has nothing to fear in uttering his honest convictions on subjects that are called difficult and delicate, and that you desire to have him, as good John Bunyan expresses it, “say out his say,” untrammelled and unawed, on all points legitimately belonging to his vocation.

The text implies that a woe rests on every one who builds himself up by iniquity, violence, and blood. I do not intend to discuss this general principle, but have chosen the passage as a motto for the remarks which I am about to make. Of its truth, however, I fear that the Mexican war will add another sad and striking example to the multitudes which history records. Perhaps, in the cursory examination which we shall be able to give the subject this morning, we shall find enough to convince us that the woe of violent and bloody aggrandizement is already making itself felt upon our country.

From your acquaintance with my general sentiments, you all understand, no doubt, as well before I say it, as afterwards, that I consider this war as evil, and “only evil continually.” We have indeed received grievances from Mexico. In reading the list of these grievances as presented by the President in his message announcing hostilities, and in newspapers which justify the war—“the grievous wrongs inflicted

on our citizens by Mexico through a long period of years," the refusal of all reparation, the violation of treaty stipulations, the breaking off of all diplomatic intercourse with us, and the refusal to receive our ambassador sent to seek its renewal—I feel no disposition to deny that we can make out quite as plausible a case as has been made out to justify half of the wars of Christendom. This "faint praise" we may concede, and concede it, too, without saying a word of the alleged invasion of our soil—a pretext which seems unworthy to be seriously urged as a justification of the war, since—it being a disputed territory which the two armies occupied—Mexico might as properly consider the march of our army across the Nueces an invasion of her soil, as we the march of her army across the Rio Grande, an invasion of ours—since at that very moment and for a long time previous, Great Britain had given us a precisely similar occasion of war by occupying with her forts and armies the disputed territory claimed by us in Oregon north of 49°. This alleged invasion of our soil was urged at first as the grand reason for the war. It is pleasing to notice a growing disposition to insist less on this, and to rest the justification of the war on other grievances. So it would seem that every candid person must do, now that the first excitement is passing away, and be ready by this time to own that this is in no sense a defensive war on our part.

But when, on the other side, I consider what serious grievances Mexico had sustained from us, it seems to me that, even on principles no higher than those by which governments profess to be governed, the war is unjustifiable, and this nation is accountable for its exist-

ence and its calamities. We are told by its advocates how much the honor of our country is advanced by our victories, and how all nations will be taught thereby to respect the American name and not to trifle with our rights. But I have a painful foreboding that history will point "the slow, unmoving finger of scorn" at these very triumphs, and that every advance made by our armies will but lower us from the high and honorable position to which, as a nation regulating our intercourse with other nations by the love of peace and a sacred regard to justice, we have hitherto been entitled. This war might not have been thought dishonorable five hundred years ago. But it does look incompatible with the light of this age; it does look dishonorable for a nation, pre-eminent as ours is in this age of advancement, to be crushing so feeble a neighbor for causes no more important.

But with me it is comparatively a small question, whether this war is, or is not more dishonorable than others. I condemn it on the higher principles taught in the gospel of love and peace. Since the Bible sanctions civil government and teaches that the magistrate beareth not the sword in vain, government may be justified in forcibly suppressing insurrection and repelling invasion. We may, perhaps, make imaginary suppositions of wars which this principle would justify. But wars, as they actually exist, are very different matters. It may reasonably be expected that no war, which the gospel can justify, will ever be waged in all coming time.

We may, then, dismiss all further discussion of the causes of the war, and proceed to some points intimately connected with the war itself.

I. The war has shown us the wide prevalence of the dangerous sentiment, that when war is once declared, it is taking sides with the enemy to deny either the justice or the wisdom of commencing and prosecuting it. This sentiment is concentrated into that maxim, "*Our country, right or wrong.*"

If my country is embarked in an enterprise neither wise nor just, I will not turn against her as an enemy, nor wish ill to betide her. I shall still remember,

"This is my own, my native land ;"

and with all the tender recollections which that thought awakens, with all the aspirations for her prosperity which a son should feel, my language will be—

"With all thy faults, I love thee still."

But when my country is in the wrong, I am bound to do my utmost to point out and correct that wrong. In so doing, I am showing the purest patriotism and performing the part of the most faithful friendship. When, in the revolution, Great Britain was warring unjustly against the United States, that great orator, Lord Chatham, raised his voice in Parliament in tones of indignant remonstrance against it. Edmund Burke, too, opposed it with all the energies of his gigantic mind. And have not the events of history long since given their verdict, that these men were friends of their country, wiser and more deserving to be trusted than they who vindicated the war?

The maxim—"Our country, right or wrong"—which forbids the people to oppose a war because it is begun, and browbeats them into silence about every

act of violence and blood which government may sanction, is both wicked and dangerous.

It is a *wicked* maxim. It is taking sides with iniquity; it is trampling on the eternal distinction between right and wrong; it is declaring that God's law is a nullity; it is sustaining injustice, and robbery, and murder, when the energies of a whole nation, aided by all the enginery that ingenuity can invent, and wielded with all the skill that educated talents can apply, are concentrated on perpetrating the crime, and villages and cities, provinces and states are the broad field over which its desolations spread. What? shall government take on itself to declare an unjust war, and, the moment it is done, must all the people say, "Amen?" Must we call it glory to pay the taxes, to pour out the blood of ourselves or our sons to carry it on? Must Christians come to the altar and pray for God's blessing on injustice? Must we brand with infamy every man who speaks, and every convention that passes resolutions against it? What authority has government to vote wrong into right, and lay every man under ban and interdict that dares to question their doings? Verily, this is morality, which will not bear scrutiny in the High Chancery of Heaven.

The maxim is as *dangerous* as it is wicked. The events of the past few months show us that it is in the President's power to plunge the nation in war. He has only to order the army or navy to some act of aggression, and hostilities are begun. Now what is the dangerous influence of the maxim on which we are commenting? Under its influence, Congress without taking any time for reflection, declare that

war exists, and, as if the commencement of hostilities must of necessity leave no place for discussion or opposition, scarce any lift their voices to resist or to demand investigation. I say, under the influence of this maxim; for it is plain that, but for the impression which had seized the minds of Congress, that it was too late to discuss or to oppose without dishonor, the President never could have brought us into our present position. There is a broad distinction between the commencement of hostilities and the declaration of war. Hostilities are of not infrequent occurrence on the borders of contiguous countries. Yet they do not necessarily lead to war, since the war-making power may disclaim the hostilities and settle the quarrel peaceably. Hostilities have commenced twice within a few years between us and Great Britain; once on the disputed territory in Maine, and once in the seizure of the steamboat *Caroline*. Each time we had a narrow escape from war; yet the government so acted that we did escape it. Therefore the commencement of hostilities imposes on Congress no *necessity* of declaring or prosecuting a war. If they do it, the responsibility is their own. And now, when, as in the cases just cited, only on a larger scale, hostilities, equally unauthorized by the war-making power, have commenced on the disputed territory between us and Mexico, and the President announces the fact to Congress, is Congress released from all responsibility and placed under necessity of recognizing the war? Common sense answers, No. Facts in our past history answer, No. The constitution, which vests the war-making power in Congress and holds them responsible for preserving and exercising that right, answers, No,

If, as we are told, members of Congress then believed that the President had, by his own act, unwarrantably and unwisely plunged us into war, and thus been guilty of an unconstitutional usurpation, they had the power of impeachment, and were accountable for its exercise. The least that any one, holding such sentiments, should have done, would have been to vote to repudiate the President's course and to call on him to retrace his steps. Or, if this is more than there was any possibility of effecting, they might yet have refused to declare or recognize a war, and have adopted energetic measures at once to rescue our army from its imagined peril, and to bring hostilities to a speedy end. But instead of this, behold a formal recognition of war, and a declaration that it existed, not by the act, much less by the fault of the President, but by the act of Mexico—and all this carried with eagerness, with enthusiasm, with indecent haste. It is wrong for members of Congress, who voted thus to sustain and vindicate the President, to try to screen themselves from responsibility by throwing all the blame on him. The declaration which has come to us from high authority, "Nobody voted for the war ; nobody but the President made it," is a great mistake. An impartial review of facts compels us to hold Congress, a noble few excepted, responsible with the President for the existence of the war. If the President began it, Congress, with full power to arrest, sustained it. I say these things not to vindicate the President. All that worlds can buy, would not tempt me to take the responsibility which he has assumed in provoking this war. But facts compel me to add that scarcely less fearful is the responsibility of those who

voted that war exists by the act of Mexico. And here is the danger from the maxim of which we speak, that it enables the President, by provoking hostilities, to bind Congress under an imagined necessity to forget their own responsibility and to recognize or declare war, contrary to their own convictions of right ; and thus to turn Congress into a set of puppets to do his will.

This maxim is as really dangerous, so far as it has influence among the people : no man opens his lips against the war ; its causes and management are not scrutinized. His worst enemies do not charge our present chief magistrate with any intention of stretching his own prerogative. But we can suppose the case of an ambitious President, aiming to enlarge and perpetuate his power. He has only to provoke some other nation to hostilities, and then to rely on this maxim for sufficient aid in doing the rest. Supplies will be profusely voted ; the enthusiastic people will second and sustain the warlike measures ; this only will be thought patriotic, every other course, disgraceful ; the victories will be hailed as brilliant accessions to the nation's glory ; and it will need only the ordinary ability of ambitious leaders to enable the President, by taking advantage of the enthusiasm created by this false sentiment, to usurp the government and destroy our liberties. If this is at present an unlikely supposition, we are taking the course most rapidly to remove its improbability. It is the tendency of war, as all history shows, to bring uneasy heroes into being, to nourish their ambition, and to furnish them with tools and opportunities to gratify it ; and at the same time, to prepare for their success by intoxicating the people with military ardor, and fitting them

to confound the interests of their country with the interests of its Cæsar, and patriotism with loyalty to him. If happily, the sentiment which we are considering is not yet strong and prevalent enough to chain us to the car of a Cæsar or a Bonaparte, let us be wary how we give it strength. And we may do well to remember that there are other nefarious designs, less glaring than the one supposed, yet full of mischief, which may be carried through at will, if the commencement of hostilities must compel us to support a war, and the power of a perverted public sentiment is to forbid us rigidly to scrutinize it and freely to speak our dissatisfaction.

This false notion of patriotism had its origin when the world was governed by despots. A fit instrument it is for their purposes, cajoling the people into the belief that, if government plunge them into war, patriotism and honor demand that they sustain it to the last drop of their blood. It is a sentiment fit only for tyrants and for slaves ; fitted to make even a free government, despotic, and free citizens, slaves. Freemen may scrutinize their rulers' acts. As war is the worst evil our rulers can inflict, we should cherish, as one of our dearest rights, the right to scrutinize their wars, and to proclaim, with trumpet voice, their inexpediency or wickedness. Strange, when we hold our rulers to so strict an accountability on other points, that we go so far toward releasing them from all accountability on this vital point of making war ; and suffer ourselves to be duped into the belief that, the moment hostilities, by whatever folly or wickedness, are commenced, there is nothing for us, but to throw up our caps and shout, " Our country, right or

wrong," and count it all glory to bear the burdens and fight the battles which our rulers order.

The Mexican war has shown that this maxim of despotism is prevalent and powerful among us, and is daily adding to its strength. In this we see the verification of our text, in that, by the extension of a sentiment fatal to both virtue and freedom, we are already feeling a part of the woe on those who build themselves up by injustice and blood.

II. This war is rapidly developing that dangerous sentiment, the *love of conquest*.

From the days of Washington, and in accordance with his sentiments, it has been conceded that peace is the true policy of our Republic ; that war is in its very nature dangerous to our liberties ; and that conquest is utterly undesirable. On these principles we have prospered and have gradually been gaining the confidence and respect of the nations. But the events of a few years past have been sweeping away these maxims, and that warlike spirit of conquest, which our wisest statesmen had previously endeavored to suppress, has broken forth like an inundation, and men are found encouraging it as essential to the welfare and glory of the nation. The acquisition of Louisiana, though regarded with much jealousy at the time, was acquiesced in, as a peculiar measure, necessary to the safety and the unrestricted use of our own territory and rivers ; and it appears not to have greatly aroused the ambition of conquest. To the annexation of Texas the people were at first generally opposed. But, by the skillful management of those who from the outset were bent on its acquisition, a plurality of the

people gave it their sanction. If the question of excluding it could again be raised, I fear that the opponents of annexation would be found a most meager minority. About that time, the annexation of California was talked of; but people generally supposed it was only in jest. The jest, however, has already become earnest. Not only California, but New Mexico is already annexed, and the public mind scarcely attempts to assign limits to our expected acquisitions. Thus rapidly has the love of conquest spread. We have significant tokens of its growth even in Massachusetts. When the news of our victories reached Boston last May, a single printing office was illuminated, and great indignation was expressed at that. But for the capture of Monterey a salute of one hundred guns was fired on the Common.

The evils of all this are already apparent. We have been discussing the constitutionality of annexing foreign territory, and whether, if annexed at all, it must be by the Treaty-making power, or by vote of Congress. We thought we were discussing grave questions, having important bearings on our constitution and our rights. But, unless Congress will be decided, and withal conscientious enough to act on their own responsibility and set aside unconstitutional doings, we may dispense with these questions in future. Here we have military officers taking possession of whole provinces, annexing them to the United States, establishing civil government, and administering the oath of allegiance, and the first that the sovereign people or their Representatives in Congress know of it is, that it is done. And the worst of it is, that the majority, when they hear of it, hurrah in an extasy of joy,

and never stop to think, so bewildered are they by the glory of military success, that in these transactions the Constitution and their rights as freemen are trampled in the dust. It is just in this way that wars are dangerous to republics, because in the license of war, the Constitution is infringed, and the people are so filled with military ardor, that blindest of frenzies, as to take no notice of the sacrifice of their rights.

There is no reason to be astonished at the rapid increase of this lust of conquest. There is something so fascinating in military show, something so exhilarating and intoxicating in the imagined glory of conquest, that we may expect this spirit, now that vent is given to it, to rage like a conflagration. Especially is this true of this nation. Our armies cannot be made up of such materials as England's. The dregs of society will not compose our troops. War cannot long continue, but soldiers volunteer or are drafted from our own homes; the pulsations of the strife are felt at every fireside, and gradually military zeal and revenge fever more and more deeply the population. Here is our danger. It is said by those who ought to know, that the Administration cannot now stop the war, if they try; that there is such a thirst among large portions of the people for conquering and beating the Mexicans, that they will not be held back, but, like the tiger that has got a taste of blood, will suck the carcass dry. No doubt there is much truth in this. The government have conjured up a spirit, which "will not down at their bidding." Here is their terrific responsibility, in having called forth this unmanageable spirit, which is now throbbing

in the untamed breasts of thousands, and propelling their furious energies to havoc.

We might be admonished by the history of the past. The French Republicans, full of this spirit of conquest, conceived themselves to be the apostles of freedom, and undertook by arms to convey its blessings through Europe. The result was that they were themselves brought under military despotism, and, after being scourged for a quarter of a century by the bloodiest of wars, found themselves at last under the dotardly tyranny from which they at first revolted. We are beginning to exhibit this very spirit of French Propagandism. When we find men urging how miserably Mexico is governed, and what a blessing it would be to her to be brought under our institutions, and urging it as a justification of the war, we see an appalling resemblance to the arguments by which those old French infidels justified themselves in making war on all Europe to spread republicanism; and all that we urge about "extending the area of freedom," differs in nothing from the hypocritical cant by which they covered their all-grasping ambition.

Monarchists perpetually reproach Republics with an ambitious disposition to prey on their feebler neighbors. This was no slander of ancient Rome, and, perhaps, of every powerful Republic of past times. And military ambition finally destroyed their liberties. This Republic has been an exception, to whose glorious example of peace and moderation we could point in refutation of the charge. But we can do it no longer. We did hope this nation would strike out a path of her own, and, occupying a new continent, would introduce a new and glorious era in the

history of freedom. We do not despair yet. But, in rushing into this career of conquest, she is entering the old and common-place track which republics trod 2,000 years ago, and, I say it without doubt or wavering, if this thirst for conquest be not checked, she will perish ingloriously as they. It will be a pity, which no tears can adequately lament, if this nation, having the opportunity of winning a glory which no nation ever won—the glory of freedom and prosperity in the arts of peace, the exercise of moderation, and the prevalence of intelligence, virtue, and piety, and thus by peaceful moral influence, of diffusing liberty and blessedness over the globe—shall cast it away, and take up instead the old and faded laurels of military triumphs, the common-place renown which hundreds of human butchers have won before.

This spirit of aggression has already awakened the jealousy of other nations. France, through her prime minister, has declared the necessity of extending to this continent the European system of the balance of power, and her determined opposition to the extension of our territories. England, though less explicit, is not less jealous. It would not be strange if this war should involve us in the turmoil of European politics, from which it has always been our settled policy to keep free. All European Christendom banded against the aggressions of France. A career of conquest must be expected to arouse similar jealousy, and hostility against us.

The enlargement of our territories, by increasing the dissimilarity of our population and the diversity of our local interests, by leading to a larger standing army, and by the direct and indirect military influence

of the conquest, must make our government more difficult to be administered and our liberties more precarious. A single fact may show one class of consequences which would result from annexing Mexican territory. After taking Santa Fe, Gen. Kearney and his staff, in full dress, bearing lighted tapers, accompanied through the streets a Popish procession in honor of some saint or relic. Indignation struggles with emotions of the ridiculous in reading this. If we must conquer Mexico, let us not be compelled to hear of such contemptible hypocrisy, jesuitry, and idolatry in our military officers. But the fact speaks volumes as to one sort of influence which would be exerted on our candidates for office, on public measures, and the community generally by the extension and annexation of our conquests.

Here, again, we see a verification of the text. In the very act of grasping new territory by violence and blood, we are grasping the curse of the Almighty and hugging destruction to our bosoms.

III. The war is producing recklessness of moral principle.

We in Massachusetts look at it in the light of natural justice, and generally condemn it. But, if the tone of many leading papers may be taken as an index of public sentiment, the impression is extensively prevalent that enlarged and statesman-like minds need look only at the advantages expected from the war. The question of its natural justice is disposed of, in many quarters, as a mere speculation in metaphysics, with which practical men have nothing to do. We find in some of the most respectable newspapers of

Northern cities sentiments like the following. "The Constitution has nothing to do with the war." "No question occurs to the public mind as to the morality of it. Contempt for the Mexicans does not allow our people to consider this point. They look to the fact that the Mexicans have boundless territory which they do not improve." "Their imbecility gives us a title of possession as good as theirs." "It is the work of destiny. It could no more have been avoided than expedited." "The history of the United States presents an entire series of innovations on all established rules of government and *religion*.(!!) Our whole history is a miracle. Half of its wonders are yet to be wrought out." Such is the robber-logic of multitudes, both at the North and South, in justifying the war.

It is interesting to notice how similar circumstances lead to similar ideas. *Destiny* has been the usual plea of rapacious conquerors. It was perpetually in the mouth of Napoleon. And now we find it on the lips of our countrymen. No sooner do we begin the conqueror's work, than we learn the conqueror's language. It is a plea which strikes at the root of all virtue. Our destiny to grind in pieces a feeble and distracted state, to murder its citizens, destroy its cities, and seize its territories? The language is an insult to the God that made us; it is laying the blame of our wickedness on God himself. It shows how indefensible is the cause which needs to be sustained by such a plea, and how blunted their moral feelings who can seriously urge it. So of all the arguments above cited, they are the well-known, stereotype arguments of unjust aggressors.

Here, again, we may see an exemplification of the

text. This attempt to aggrandize ourselves by blood is cutting the sinews of virtue and religion, which are the stability of our institutions, and dethroning the majesty of the Constitution and of Law. Already has it produced an awful recklessness of moral obligation, and with terrific rapidity is it ripening us for the sickle of avenging justice.

IV. It remains only to consider the connection of this war with slavery.

It would be easy to prove from documentary evidence that the extension and strengthening of slavery was a leading object in the annexation of Texas. The present war, as is well known, is a consequence of that annexation. Therefore it is a war which slavery has brought upon us. I have not time to enter on the proof of this; nor is it needful, as in various ways, it has been spread before you in the public prints, and I suppose, few, if any of you doubt it. Let us take facts as they are. We find ourselves at war with Mexico. Our troops are penetrating the country in various directions, taking possession of its provinces and formally annexing them to the United States, by the authority, as the officers tell us, of the President. Ought not every patriot to ask, what is the object of this invasion and on the accomplishment of what is it to cease? Is it to obtain payment of a paltry debt of six millions? Believe it who will. Is it not to take possession of Mexican territory and annex it to the the United States? The public sentiment says, Yes. The proclamations of our officers, annexing conquered territory by the President's authority, say, Yes. And is it the intention to settle this territory, on which now

not a slave breathes, with slaveholders and slaves, as the once free State of Texas was settled, and then admit it, divided into slaveholding States, into the Union? We need not look at these questions as partizans. On vital points like these, we have something higher to seek than the integrity of a party. It were a shame to blink at questions like these for the fear of losing or for the sake of carrying a party measure. I call you to look at them as patriots, as men, as friends of humanity, as uncompromising opponents, as every Massachusetts man claims to be, of slavery. Look at the prospect opening before us. Consider what a stigma will be branded forever on this Republic, if she uses her might to seize the territory of Mexico—territory, behind us as we say she is in civilization, liberty, and religion, from which she swept, years ago, every vestige of domestic slavery—if we seize this free territory, set up again the system of slavery in it, annex it to our own country, and throw the powerful arms of our strength and protection, in loving embrace, around this institution of wickedness. Yet there is not room for a shadow of doubt that it will be done, unless Northern men, of all parties, take a more decided stand than ever yet they have done, in uncompromising opposition to such measures. There is reason for devout gratitude that we have had one proof that such decision may hereafter be expected. I refer to the vote of the House of Representatives in the last session, that slavery should be forever excluded from all territory which might be annexed in the treaty which was then contemplated. The motion was made by a Democrat of Pennsylvania, and passed by a majority of six, sus-

tained by votes of Northern members of both parties.

The extreme measures of the last few years manifestly for the support and extension of slavery, ought to open every man's eyes to our danger from this source, and to lead every man to determined opposition to every public measure designed to extend slavery. I have no desire to see a Northern party arrayed against the South. But since the South are carrying measures with so high a hand, we have no alternative but to resist in self-defense. They tell us we have nothing to do with slavery. But the fact is daily becoming more apparent that we have something to suffer from it, if nothing to do with it. But the South themselves have taught us the falsity of their own maxim. Have they not in Congress given their vote to sanction the slavery illegally extended over the free domain of Texas, and to admit that State to the Union? Are we not all waging a war which slavery has brought on us? The South have themselves taught us that the North, that Congress have something to do with slavery. Shall they vote in Congress to sanction the extension of slavery over free territories and admit them to the Union, and then shall they turn round and tell us that we have no right, that Congress have no right to oppose the extension of slavery? It certainly becomes us to give a serious and earnest attention to this matter, and to act with determined resolution against the extension of the evil. Since the South seem bent on adding foreign territory indefinitely for the formation of slaveholding States, let it be the deliberate, the well understood, and settled policy of Northern men of every party,

that no more foreign territory in which slaveholding exists shall be added to the Union, and that no more slaveholding States shall be admitted. It is a position to which the South have driven us. And I am convinced, whatever may be said of our past yielding and conciliating policy, if we fail hereafter to oppose to our utmost the further extension of slavery, we become guilty ourselves of aiding and abetting it, and perpetuating its unspeakable abominations. Slavery is itself a system of self-aggrandizement by injustice and blood. We need not wonder at the complication of woes in which we find ourselves involved through our connection with it. Every law of self-defense, as well as of justice and humanity, demands that we oppose its extension.

And now, all that I ask further is, that you will seriously consider the evils on which I have commented, and, so far as you believe I have spoken truth, will offer your prayers, and put forth your influence, not only that this war may cease, but that the evil sentiments and institutions which have occasioned and which perpetuate it, and which are strengthened and extended by it, may be done away.

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